

shortage of LPG in Maharashtra and particularly at Nagpur;

(b) if so, whether any concrete measures have been contemplated by the Government to meet the shortage of LPG;

(c) the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government also propose to take steps to enhance the production of Natural Gas in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c). The demand and the existing consumers of LPG in the State of Maharashtra, who are enrolled with the distributors of public sector oil companies, is by and large being met in full. Temporary backlogs that may arise are cleared by augmenting LPG supplies through operation of bottling plants for extended hours and on holidays and by arranging supplies from bottling plants in adjoining areas.

(d) and (e). The current production of natural gas of around 63 MMSCMD is likely to increase to 84 MMSCMD BY 2001-02 through development of new gas fields and additional development of some of the existing gas fields.

Transmission through Electronic Media

2282. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the CSIR in collaboration with a HEAD Project of Canada has developed a programme of collection and transmission of information through electronic media; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b). Publications and Information Directorate (now renamed as National Institute of Science Communication (NISCOM), a constituent unit of CSIR, is participating as lead organisation in AHEAD (acronym for Asian Health, Environmental and Allied Databases). AHEAD is an international consortium of eight Asian Institutions spread over six Asian countries engaged in dissemination of information on Environment, Health and Natural Products pertaining to the Asian region in the form of CD ROMs. It is envisaged to release three CD ROM Disks every six months. The Project is at present funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

Sale of Bitumen

2283. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation sells bitumen to State Government's agencies at concessional rate;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether attention of the Union Government has been drawn to the alleged sale of bitumen by the Indian Oil Corporation, Calcutta against irregular allotment orders in the names of different agencies of Government of Bihar;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action taken or proposed to be taken against the guilty officials of the Indian Oil Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir. The Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) does not sell bitumen to State Governments' agencies at a concessional rate.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e). Based on press reports, regarding alleged bitumen scandal in Bihar, IOC has started internal enquiry in the matter.

Sanitation Problem

2284. SHRI K.S.R. MURTHY : Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state :

(a) the magnitude of the problem of sanitation in the country, State/UT-wise;

(b) the funds required to solve this problem; and

(c) the manner in which the Government propose to solve this problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Attached Statement I and II indicate the State/UT-wise population, covered with sanitation facilities in urban and rural areas respectively. The balance population, i.e. 49.74% in urban areas and 81.53% in rural areas in the country do not have the facility.

(b) and (c). A group was set up by the Government with Secretary (Health) as Convenor in 1994 to develop a Comprehensive National Programme on Sanitation and Environmental Hygiene. The Group has made detailed estimate of the overall development requirement upto 2025 AD. These are to be examined before a final view is taken on this issue.